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5105 North Figueroa Street
Los Angeles, California 90042
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Published in the United States of America by Builders of the Adytum and simultaneously in the Dominion of Canada by Ridout and Maybe, Toronto 1, Canada.

New and Revised Edition

Printed in the United States of America

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TAROT FUNDAMENTALS

Lesson No. 14

BUILDERS OF THE ADYTUM

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Lesson Fourteen

THE HIEROPHANT

In the preceding lesson you learned that in some versions of Tarot, Key 5 is called The Pope, in reference to the attribution of hearing to the letter Vav. In the Bible passage there quoted, note that the traditional first pope is called not only Simon Peter ("Hearing, the Rock") but also Simon Bar-jona, or Simon, son of Jonah ("Hearing, son of the Dove"). In this connection, remember that the dove pictured on the Empress' shield is not only a Christian symbol for the Holy Spirit, but also a bird sacred to Venus, ruler of the sign Taurus.

In Key 5, the principle of antithesis which runs throughout the Tarot is shown particularly by the contrast between the shaped stone which is a prominent detail of the design and the rough rock in the background of Key 4. The Hierophant sits between two carved stone pillars, on a stone throne, in a stone temple.

The Emperor, in Key 4, sits out-of-doors because the activity he symbolizes is concerned more particularly with the ordering and arrangement of external conditions. The Hierophant, like the High Priestess, sits within a building because the mental activity he pictures has to do mainly with revelation of the inner significance of the conditions which the Emperor rules.

Actually, the Hierophant and the Emperor are not two, but one. This is shown by the old title, The Pope, which means literally, The Father. It refers to the conditions of early social organization in which the head of the family was also the chief authority in religious matters. When the Magician has brought into existence a family over which he rules as father and king, he assumes the responsibility of transmitting his wisdom to his children. Thus he becomes the Revealer, or Hierophant.

"Father", moreover, is a technical term used by Hebrew sages to designate the second aspect of the Life-power named Wisdom. This is the Wisdom mentioned in The Pattern on the Trestleboard in the statement numbered 2. Your first glance at Key 5 will show that it pictures the transmission of Wisdom from the Parent Source.

The Emperor wears armor, but the Hierophant wears the vestments of the peaceful priestly office. These are adaptations of feminine garments to indicate that Intuition is an extension and development of reason, effected when the special conditions of a given external situation are linked up with the inner, subconscious memory of universal principles. That memory is first shown in Tarot by the scroll of the High Priestess. The insignia of the Emperor are those of earthly rulership. Those of the Hierophant are symbols of spiritual dominion.

The Hierophant's outer robe is red-orange, a color assigned to Taurus. It is trimmed with blue-green edging. Blue-green is the color complementary to red-orange and refers to the sign Scorpio. His undergarment is blue, like the robe of the High Priestess, and has the same meaning. Over it is a white robe which symbolizes enlightenment.

The outer garment is fastened at the throat by a silver crescent. The region of the neck and throat is under the dominion of Taurus. The shape and material of the crescent refer to the moon, which is exalted in Taurus.

The crown is egg-shaped denoting the idea that the One Force (that is, the Reality represented by the symbol of the Cosmic Egg) bestows spiritual sovereignty on man whose life includes all the potencies of the universe.

Hanging from the crown, behind the ears of the Hierophant, is an ornament in the form of a yoke. This refers to the primitive meaning of the letter Vav. It falls behind the Hierophant's ears to call attention to those organs of hearing.

Observe that only one ear of the Hierophant is visible, just as only one eye of the Emperor is shown. What the inner ear hears is the revelation of a single truth which has innumerable applications. What the eye of reason sees is also a single Reality having innumerable aspects.

The golden staff represents the dominion of the Life-power through the planes of nature represented by the knob and three cross-bars. These bars are analogous in meaning to the three crowns, and the knob at the top of the staff corresponds to the circular ornament which surmounts the crown.

The lowest bar and the lowest crown represent the element of earth and the physical plane, symbolized by the Magician's coin or pentacle. The next bar and crown, counting upward, symbolize the element of air and the formative world or astral plane, corresponding to the sword in Key 1. The upper bar and crown stand for the element of water and for the creative world, or mental plane, represented by the Magician's cup. The knobs at the tops of staff and crown stand for the element of fire and the spiritual plane, or archetypal world corresponding to the wand on the Magician's table.

The crossed keys at the Hierophant's feet represent the sun and moon, gold for the sun, silver for the moon. They suggest that an understanding of the power of light (gold) and its reflection (silver) unlocks the mysteries of life. The wards of the keys show a bell-and-clapper design intended to indicate the importance of sound vibration, and of the function of hearing.

These are the traditional keys to heaven and hell. The golden key is the key to heaven, wherein the sun is ruler. The silver key is associated with hell because of the correspondence

between the moon and Hecate whom the Greeks worshipped as a deity of the underworld. Thus the silver key has to do with the powers of subconsciousness, and the golden key represents the powers of superconsciousness.

The throne, which is ornamented and therefore a product of human adaptation, is of stone. Wherever one finds this material employed in the symbolism of the Western Tradition, it refers to the secret meaning of the Hebrew word אבן, ehben. This word is itself a symbol of union, because its first two letters spell אב, Ab meaning "father", and the last two spell בן, Ben, the Hebrew for "son".

Thus אבן, ehben, signifies esoterically the union of the Father (God) and the Son (humanity); and the same word is used by Hebrew sages to designate many variations of this basic occult meaning. Place in a row the three Tarot Keys corresponding to the letters א, ב and ן (the final form of נ, Nun). These are Key 0, 1 and 13. You will then **see** something which will give you a better understanding of the inner significance of the words.

In harmony with what has just been said, older versions of Tarot call Key 5 the Pope, that is, the Father. Yet they attribute this Key to Vav which letter is, in Hebrew wisdom, a special symbol of the aspect of the Life-power known as the **Lesser Countenance,** or **Son.** This is the sixth aspect of Reality known usually as Beauty.

As you read on page 1, the word Father has special reference to the aspect of the Life-power named Wisdom, and the Paternal Wisdom is said to be the seat of the universal Life-force. In the same system of occult philosophy, the name Son is applied, as we have just said, to the sixth aspect of Reality corresponding to the sixth statement in The Pattern on the Trestleboard. This sixth aspect is likewise understood to be the particular manifestation of the universal Life-force as the Ego of humanity. Thus, where stone is prominent in Tarot symbols, you may know that it refers to some phase of the union of the Divine Life-force with the human Ego.

The pillars, like those of the High Priestess, represent the Law of Polarity. On each capital you will notice that part of the design resembles the letter "U", one of the English equivalents for Vav. The rest of the ornamentations of the pillars represents the union of masculine and feminine potencies and thus relates to the Law of Gender.

The priests who kneel before the Hierophant wear robes whereon are embroidered replicas of the flowers in the Magician's garden. Thus the two ministers stand for desire and knowledge. The orphreys or Y's on their garments are variants of the yoke symbol. They are yellow, the color associated with Mercury and the Magician, to show that both desire and knowledge are under the yoke (direction) of self-consciousness.

The background is gray, a color associated with the same Paternal Wisdom which the Hierophant symbolizes. Gray is a balanced mixture of white and black, another suggestion of

the union of the known and the unknown or the blending of spirit and matter. Gray is also the result of the mixture of any pair of complementary colors. Thus it is a symbol of the blending and balance of all pairs of opposites.

Of similar import is the checkered border of the carpet covering the dais. These alternate squares of white and black represent by their form order and reason, and by their alternate colors the alternation of day and night. Thus they refer to the Law of Rhythm and to periodicity.

Ten crosses of equal arms appear on this Key, one on each hand and foot of the Hierophant, four (enclosed in circles) on the carpet, and two in the handles of the keys. They represent the ten basic aspects of the Life-power, and correspond to the ten ornaments on the Fool's robe and to the ten cypresses in the Empress' garden.

They also represent the mystical number, 4,000. This is because each cross is a letter Tav, as written in ancient Hebrew. The value of Tav being 400, ten Tavs represent 4,000. This number 4,000 is one of several numbers used as symbols for perfection. It is a symbol for the ALL.

Key 5 shows the One Life-power as being the Teacher of mankind. By its correspondences and associations it instructs us that our personal contact with the Inner Teacher is by means of mental hearing.

The Inner Teacher is the **Guru** so often mentioned in writings on Hindu occultism. In those books we find many counsels which may be summed up in the admonition: "Revere your Guru." Some of the self-styled "Sris" and "Rishis" and "Swamis" who have fattened on the more gullible American seekers for light on the mysteries of the Orient, take good care to impress this doctrine, in its most literal interpretation, upon their bewildered and bedazzled dupes. Many exoteric forms of Hinduism go as far in corrupting the doctrine to mean slavish obedience to a personal teacher. The true meaning is different.

In order to receive instruction from the Inner Teacher, we must first of all recognize His presence in our lives. He may be hidden behind the veil of our own ignorance, but if we give the idea due consideration, we shall see that there is a very high order of probability in the assumption. Then, like good spiritual scientists, we shall put this to the test of experiment. We shall listen for the instruction from within, and shall do so with full intention to be guided by it.

This lesson, and Key 5, are intended to help you establish clear and definite contact with the Inner Teacher. Thus will you arrive at the degree of understanding and discrimination which will enable you to distinguish the Inner Voice of true intuition from telepathic invasions from other entities, incarnate or discarnate, human or non-human.

The steps to be taken are as follows:

1. Acknowledge the high order of **probability** in the hypothesis that the Universal Mind is centered at the very heart of your personal existence.

2. Determine to test that hypothesis by daily acts of attentive and earnest **listening** for the instruction of the Inner Teacher.

3. Study most carefully the content of all messages received from what seems to be "within." True intuition, remember, **always unfolds principles.** It never counsels what is merely expedient. It is always concise and clear and its meaning is unmistakable. It never flatters. More likely it will reprove. It never misleads and can stand the severest spiritual, moral and intellectual tests. As Lao-tze says: "Its counsel is always in season."

4. Make up your mind, when you have received instruction, to obey it. When you distinguish a true intuition, take steps to carry it out in action. You will never be coerced, yet you **must** obey, because implicit obedience will be understood by you as being the only way to solve whatever problem you have to master.

THE VOICE WITHIN

The Hierophant stresses the need for intuitional guidance in every life and in all the daily affairs of human existence. Only as we tap into the cosmic current of perfect knowledge about all things may we expect to achieve satisfactory results. To do this, we must, first of all, have a definite aim.

Having the aim, and having also garnered by keen observation of our actual present situation, we can imagine some part of what to expect, and the image of the desired result grows clearer and clearer. Then we use reasoning, just as far as we are able. These are indispensable preliminaries to the higher knowing brought by intuition.

Use concentrated thought on your immediate problem, or on the idea you wish to expand. Marshal the facts. Get statistics. Analyze the products of your creative imagination. If you have a plan, tear it apart. Look inside it to see what makes it tick.

When you reason intensively, you initiate a process which leads to intuition. Intuition is reason carried to the **nth** degree. The minute you attack a problem with all the mental power at your command and organize the known facts about it, you are preparing yourself to hear the Voice Within. Persist in your intensive thought and suddenly, without conscious effort, you cease to reason and begin to receive intuitive guidance.

Your systematic thought, passing through the radio of your mind, is the electric current which activates your personal receiving set. Just as the radio in your home must be adjusted to the vibratory rate of the broadcasting station in order to bring in the programs you desire, so must your mind be attuned by the processes of observation, recollection, imagination and reason, in order to bring in from the cosmic reservoir the special information you require.

It is not that you have a personal power called intuition. When people are said to be "intuitive", what is meant is that they are more receptive than most. Intuition is "inner teaching", and the Inner Teacher is the indivisible, cosmic SELF.

On this account it is necessary to caution you strongly against being misled by careless observation of what goes on in your mind. We all talk to ourselves, but genuine intuition is not that. Some of us tune in on the thoughts of other people, incarnate and discarnate. Intuition is not that. Subconsciousness can elaborate what we give it, and make astonishing developments and variations of our conscious thoughts and suggestions. Wonderful as this is, it is not what we mean by intuition. Our own thinking, conscious and subconscious, and the ideas and the thoughts of other personalities—none of these are the Voice Within. These are the "voices", and truly their name is Legion. They intrude. They interrupt like ill-mannered children. They cajole, and flatter, and demand obedience.

The Voice is different. It speaks quietly and always to the point. It never flatters. Often it rebukes. But even this is impersonal and has no harshness. One outstanding thing is this: **The Voice never interrupts.** Consequently, you must silence the clamor of your own mental voice and refuse to listen to any of the "voices". Of this you may be sure. He who is not a good listener in the ordinary, every-day sense, is never the recipient of intuition. Test yourself and others by this.

When somebody claims to have "inner guidance", whatever he may attribute it to, notice whether or not that person listens attentively to what other people have to say. Notice, also, whether or not what he claims to get from within agrees with fact and reason. Is he, in the main, one whose daily conduct seems to show self-discipline and good sense? Then it is probable that he really does receive guidance, really does hear the Voice Within. Finally, he won't say much about it, and certainly will never pester you with accounts of his wonderful visions and revelations.

You won't have much difficulty applying this test to other people. See that you take your own medicine. No bad listener ever hears the Voice of the Hierophant.

You may say, as do many others: "But I can't hear a voice. I take your word for it that the Voice speaks; but it doesn't say anything to me." Read over the last few paragraphs and you may understand why. On the other hand, there are some temperaments, some personalities, for whom the inner teaching comes more in the form of visual impression. Some of us see. Others hear. The sensory impression varies. Some of us just have a strong **feeling.** Yet the

feeling, or the vision, or the Voice never invades our personal privacy. Whatever the sense form, we must **be still** before we may receive the inner instruction.

For this, the best preparation is ordinary silence. Try keeping the capital "I" out of your ordinary conversation and writing. Make a game of it and see how often you can eliminate that pronoun. Hold your tongue, also, about personal affairs of other people. There isn't room for Higher Wisdom in a mind that is filled with the details of petty gossip. Aim to be a good listener and do your practicing on your friends and acquaintances. You'll find, also, that your understanding of the characters of those you listen to will deepen wonderfully. Thus your preparation for hearing the One Voice will result in practical benefits in many directions.

Remember, genuine occultism is what is hidden behind the veil of everyday appearances. **It is not necessary to be a physical or a mental contortionist in order to be an occultist.** BE STILL, AND LISTEN. Then the Voice will speak.